

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1 to 23 in view of the amendments to claims 7 and 19 and the remarks which follow. The Applicant would also like to thank Examiner Wilson for his indication that Claims 1 to 23 would be allowed if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph.

Claims 1 to 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, based upon the limitation of “a flange portion on opposed sides of said pilot portion” which the Examiner held required “two claimed flange portions” and the further limitation of a “planar panel support face” and a “single groove” which the Examiner held “leaves the second claimed flange portion without a clear function.” The Applicant agrees that Claims 7 and 19 did claim “a generally rectangular flange portion on opposed sides of said pilot portion” and the Applicant agrees that Claims 7 and 19 do require *two flange portions* and Claims 7 and 19 have now been amended solely to clarify that the self-attaching female fastener includes “generally rectangular flange portions” and thus the Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 7 and 19 are allowable based upon the Examiner’s finding that the claims “would be allowable if rewritten or amended” to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph.

The Applicant, however, respectfully traverses the rejection of Claims 1 to 6 and 14 to 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph for the following reasons. As set forth in the specification of this application, the self-attaching female fastener of this invention may be “cold rolled from steel wire,” wherein the fastener will be generally rectangular including a central pilot portion and flange portions on opposed sides of the pilot portion (two flange portions), each having a planar panel support face and a groove in the panel support face of the flange portions (see, for example, paragraph [00012], page 7). The V-shaped bottom wall of the re-entrant groove then centers the rolls during rolling of the cross-section of the fastener making it easier to roll and resulting in a more accurate cross-section as described in paragraph [00038], page 17.

However, the self-attaching female fastener of this invention “may also be formed by cold-forming techniques, including a progressive die, wherein the re-entrant groove may be annular surrounding the pilot portion.” (See [00013], page 8). For example, the self-attaching female fastener “may be generally round having an annular groove in the panel support face of the flange portion” (paragraph [00015], page 9, lines 23 et. seq.), wherein the fastener *would have only one flange portion* surrounding the pilot portion and *one groove*. As stated in paragraph [00039] (page 18, line 19 to page 19, line 3):

More specifically, the self-attaching female fastener of this invention may be formed by conventional cold-forming techniques, including progressive dies, wherein the female fastener is, for example, round or oval-shaped rather than rectangular. In this embodiment, the pilot portion 22 could be round having an annular end face and the flange portion surrounds the pilot portion, wherein the groove in the end face is also annular. The self-attaching female fastener would then have only one re-entrant groove surrounding the pilot portion having a V-shaped bottom wall as described and shown in Figures 8 to 10. Of course, the projecting lip of the die member would also be annular and configured to be received in the re-entrant groove as described above.

Thus, Claim 1 defines the self-attaching female fastener as including a central pilot portion, “a flange portion on at least opposed sides of said pilot portion having a generally planar panel support face” and “a groove in said panel support face of said flange portion adjacent said pilot portion.” Thus, Claim 1 accurately defines the self-attaching female fastener of this invention which may include two flange portions on opposed sides of the pilot portion and two grooves wherein the fastener is formed by rolling or a fastener having one flange portion “on at least opposed sides of (the) pilot portion” which may surround the pilot portion and one groove in the planar support face of an annular flange portion. The Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph.

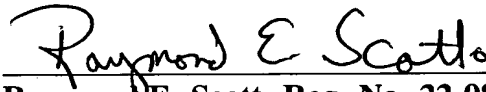
As will be understood, the invention resides in the shape of the groove or grooves having inclined inner and outer side walls and a V-shaped bottom wall as recited in Claim 1 or the

method of installing the fastener of this invention as recited in Claim 14. The Applicant respectfully submits therefore that Claims 1 to 6 and 14 to 18 are also in condition for allowance and allowance of this application is therefore respectfully requested.

Although it is believed that no fee is due for the filing of this Amendment, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2789 for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayments regarding this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond E. Scott". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.


Raymond E. Scott, Reg. No. 22,981
The Pinehurst Office Center, Suite 101
39400 Woodward Avenue
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304-5151
Telephone: (248) 723-0306

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I hereby certify that the enclosed **Amendment** is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope as Express Mail Post Office to Addressee," Mailing Label No. **EV520885724US** and addressed to **Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment**, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 on **August 26, 2004**.



Tracy L. Smith

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